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Inspirational Life Quotes – What is the Meaning of Life?

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A Warm Hug – The simplest

things in life are truly the most extraordinary!

Welcome to the Spiritual Bee's collection of **Inspirational Life Quotes!**

We have all, at some time or another, found ourselves wondering:

What is the meaning of life? Is there a purpose in being born, spending a whole lifetime struggling to live, at times, even defying the worst odds to survive, only to have to let it all go in a moment, when death knocks at the door?

“The entire purpose of manifest existence is simply to facilitate the realization of who and what you really are.”

– Metta Zetty

Life's grand struggle for existence cannot be fully explained by the propagation of species argument – for it offers no explanation for the cherished human ideals of selfless service, sacrifice for the greater good, and dying in the line of duty to protect the life of others.

It is only in the realms of spirituality that we find the best explanation.

“The light of the stars travels millions of miles to reach the earth, but it cannot reach our hearts – so many millions of miles further off are we!”

– Rabindranath Tagore

As Swami Vivekananda once wrote, “this inexplicable cycle of life and death can only be explained as *Maya* – an illusion. Beyond this lies our true self, our soul which is never born, that never dies, never changes and never goes or comes. Without birth or death, eternal, ever-existing, free, unchangeable and beyond all conditions is this soul of man – the real self of man”.

This real self, our soul, is hidden under the veil of *Maya*, and it is only through the lens of life experiences, that we can unveil the mystery and reacquaint ourselves with our hidden potentials.

Just as a seed needs the right kind of soil, the perfect temperature, air and water to germinate, so too do we need the right circumstances to reveal our true nature. Without the proper opportunity our cherished ideals of bravery, courage, sacrifice, judgment, integrity and unconditional love would never fully manifest.

“The most important lesson that man can learn from life, is not that **there is** pain in this world, but that it is possible for him to transmute it into joy.”

– Rabindranath Tagore

Life thus, is nothing but an obstacle course, running through which we evolve to become more perfect. One lifetime is probably not enough to discover our true self, and so just like a diver searching for pearls, we dive again and again into this ocean of life, going through the cycles of births and deaths, till finally we come face to face with our real nature and realize it in its true relation with the infinite beyond – that we are the infinite spirit, ever blissful, and an indivisible part of God himself.

This is the real purpose of life.

Life Quotes and Sayings by Topic

Presented below is an extraordinary collection of inspirational life quotes. These quotes on life have been organized under the following subheadings:

2. [The Best Things in Life are Free](#)
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I hope these inspirational quotes offer you a fresh perspective on dealing with life's many challenges, and fill your heart with everlasting peace and joy.

Life is Not a Race But a Journey to be Savored Each Step of the Way

There is more to life than increasing its speed.

Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948).

Keep in mind that you are always saying “no” to something. If it isn't to the apparent and urgent things in your life, it is probably to the most fundamental, highly important things.

An inspiring quote about life by Stephen Covey, author of the best-selling book “The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People”.

We famish our lives while we are busy pursuing chimerical impossibilities. One of the many suppressed longings which cry after fulfillment is for neglected joys within reach. The emptiness left by easy joys untasted, is ever growing in my life.

And the day may come when I shall feel that, could I but have the past back, I would strive no more after the unattainable, but drain to the full these little, unsought, everyday joys which life offers.

An excerpt from a letter written by Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore in 1892, published in his book [Glimpses of Bengal](#). His breathtaking literary works which can be [freely downloaded](#) at our website, provide a glimpse into the mystical and spiritual beauty of India.

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Life is too short to wake up with regrets.

Love the people who treat you right. Forget about the ones that don't.

Believe everything happens for a reason.

If you get a second chance grab it. If it changes your life, let it.

Nobody said life would be easy. They just promised it would be worth it.

A beautiful saying about life by an unknown author.

Seek to live. Remembrance is for the old.

An inspirational quote on life by Paulo Coelho, author of the best-selling book “The Alchemist: A Fable about following your Dream”.

The butterfly counts not months but moments, and has time enough.

Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941).

The Best Things in Life, Truly Are Free

It's the simple things in life that are the most extraordinary; only wise men are able to understand them.

A quote on life from Paulo Coelho's book “The Alchemist: A Fable about following your Dream”.

It sometimes strikes me how immensely fortunate I am that each day should take its place in my life, either reddened with the rising and setting sun, or refreshingly cool with deep, dark clouds, or blooming like a white flower in the moonlight. What untold wealth!

An excerpt from a letter written by Rabindranath Tagore in 1892, published in his book [Glimpses of Bengal](#).

Ralph Waldo Emerson once asked what would we do if the stars only came out once every thousand years. No one would sleep that night, of course.

The world would become religious overnight. We would be ecstatic, delirious, made rapturous by the glory of God. Instead the stars come out every night, and we watch television.

Paul Hawken renowned entrepreneur and visionary environmental activist.

Life is Difficult – This is a Great Truth

There is no escaping the hard truth that life is difficult; life is unfair; full of twists and turns, throwing challenge after challenge at us, sometimes even before we have had the opportunity to fully get back on our feet. In tough times such as these, we many end up feeling completely lost.

But on closer examination we will discover that life has a flow, a certain direction, a destination towards which it moves. Steve Jobs, the founder of Apple Computers, summarized this beautifully when he said “You can't connect the dots looking forward; you can only connect them looking backwards. So you have to trust that the dots will somehow connect in your future. You have to trust in something – your gut, destiny, life, karma, or whatever. This approach has never let me down, and it has made all the difference in my life”.

Life is difficult. This is a great truth, one of the greatest truths. It is a great truth because once we truly see this truth, we transcend it. Once we truly know that life is difficult – once we truly understand and accept it, then life is no longer difficult. Because once it is accepted, the fact that life is difficult no longer matters.

An inspirational quote about life from the best-selling book “The Road Less Traveled” by M. Scott Peck.

There is always inequity in life. Some men are killed in war and some men are wounded;

some men never leave the country, some men are stationed in the Antarctic and some are stationed in San Francisco. It's very hard in military or in personal life to assure complete equality. Life is unfair.

John F. Kennedy (1917-1963).

There is suffering in life, and there are defeats. No one can avoid them. But it's better to lose some of the battles in the struggles for your dreams than to be defeated without ever knowing what you're fighting for.

Paulo Coelho.

Security is mostly a superstition. It does not exist in nature, nor do the children of men as a whole experience it. Avoiding danger is no safer in the long run than outright exposure. Life is either a daring adventure, or nothing.

Helen Keller (1880-1968), deaf and blind American author, whose life and teachings have served as an inspiration to millions of people across the world.

Life has a flow – a certain direction: Life takes us by surprise and orders us to move toward the unknown – even when we don't want to and when we think we don't need to.

No matter how many detours and adjustments it made, the caravan moved toward the same compass point. Once obstacles were overcome, it returned to its course, sighting on a star that indicated the location of the oasis.

An inspirational quote from Paul Coelho's novel "The Alchemist".

Have patience with everything that remains unsolved in your heart. Do not despair if the answers don't come immediately. Some answers are only revealed with the passage of time. Try to love the questions themselves. Do not look for the answers. They cannot now be given to you because you could not live them. It is a question of experiencing everything. At present you need to live the question. Perhaps you will gradually without even noticing it, find yourself experiencing the answer, some distant day.

Rainer Maria Rilke (1875-1926).

It is Only by Coming to Grips With Our Difficulties, that We Realize Our Potentials

We all have inconveniences of one kind or another. How you deal with them ultimately determines how successful you are.

Craig McFarlane, blind motivational speaker.

Most people live, whether physically, intellectually, or morally, in a very restricted circle of their being. They make use of a very small portion of their possible consciousness, and of their soul's resources in general, much like a man who, out of his whole bodily organism, should get into the habit of using and moving only his little finger.

Great emergencies and crises show us how much greater our vital resources are than we had supposed.

William James (1842-1910).

So often we look at a calendar of days as merely a symbol of the passage of time. We forget why we are on this earth. We forget that there is a reason for all the pain and the struggle.

We forget that we were put on earth to learn something. If everything were perfect in this

life, we would never learn anything new. We would not be able to elevate our spirits through the events that happen to us.

Lynn V. Andrews.

It is imperative that we do not fear challenges that we have attracted to promote our growth. Every obstacle we encounter is an opportunity for spiritual evolution.

Horrible events in life serve as catalysts for major changes in our life perspective and as teaching tools for helping others.

A quote on life from the book “Secrets of the Light” by Dannion Brinkley, in which he recounts his near-death experience.

Life will inevitably provide you with countless opportunities to test your assumptions about that which is real and true. Each experience is an opportunity to delve more deeply into who and what you really are. Love your life fully and take advantage of every opportunity as it arises.

Metta Zetty.

We are afraid of losing what we have, whether it’s our life or our possessions and property. But this fear evaporates when we understand that our life stories and the history of the world were written by the same hand.

A quote about life from the book “The Alchemist” by Paulo Coelho.

**Whether joy or sorrow, pain or pleasure,
Whatsoever may befall thee,
Accept it serenely with an unvanquished heart.**

Rabindranath Tagore quoting a verse from the *Mahabharata*, in a letter to his wife Mrinalini in 1898.

Every moment of your life is infinitely creative and the universe is endlessly bountiful. Just put forth a clear enough request, and everything your heart desires must come to you.

Mahatma Gandhi.

The Choices We Make Determine Our Destiny

Life is a matter of choice. Everything we manifest in our day to day lives is the direct result of our choices along the way. Each choice automatically creates a consequence. From our choices other people’s lives are influenced for better or worse.

Therefore our choices need to be made carefully. Every single thing that one of us thinks says or does, impacts all the rest of humanity on one level or another.

An inspiring quote about life, from Dannion Brinkley’s book “Secrets of the Light”.

I can choose either to be a victim of the world or an adventurer in search of treasure. It’s all a question of how I view my life.

Paulo Coelho.

The greatest discovery of any generation is that a human being can alter his life by altering his attitude.

William James (1842-1910).

At a certain point in our lives, we lose control of what's happening to us, and our lives become controlled by fate. That's the world's greatest lie.

A line from Paulo Coelho's book "The Alchemist".

When we least expect it, life sets us a challenge to test our courage and willingness to change; at such a moment, there is no point in pretending that nothing has happened or in saying that we are not ready.

The challenge will not wait. Life does not look back. A week is more than enough time for us to decide whether or not to accept our destiny.

Paulo Coelho.

We will only understand the miracle of life fully when we allow the unexpected to happen. Every day, God gives us the sun and also one moment in which we have the ability to change everything that makes us unhappy.

Every day, we try to pretend that we haven't perceived that moment, that it doesn't exist; that today is the same as yesterday and will be the same as tomorrow. But if people really pay attention to their everyday lives, they will discover that magic moment.

It may arrive in the instant when we are doing something mundane, like putting our front-door key in the lock; it may lie hidden in the quiet that follows the lunch hour or in the thousand and one things that all seem the same to us.

But that moment exists – a moment when all the power of the stars becomes a part of us and enables us to perform miracles.

Paulo Coelho.

Once the Choice is Made, Do Not Look Back, Do Not Second-Guess Your Decisions

Think a 100 times before you take a decision. But once that decision is taken, stand by it as one man.

Muhammad Ali, world-famous heavy-weight boxing champion.

Don't think about what you've left behind, the alchemist said to the boy as they began to ride across the sands of the desert. "Everything is written in the Soul of the World, and there it will stay forever."

A line from Paulo Coelho's novel "The Alchemist".

"Once you get into the desert, there's no going back," said the camel driver. "And, when you can't go back, you have to worry only about the best way of moving forward. The rest is up to Allah, including the danger".

Paulo Coelho, in his novel "The Alchemist".

I walk slowly, but I never walk backward.

Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865).

Look not back. No, not even if you see the dearest and nearest cry. Look not back, but forward.

We cannot stop. If we stop we die. We have either to go forward or to go backward. We have either to progress or to degenerate.

Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902), one of India's greatest and most beloved spiritual teachers.

There is a Difference Between Merely Living and Living Worthily

The question is not whether a community lives or dies, the question is on what plane does it live? There are different modes of survival. But all are not equally honorable.

For an individual as well as a society, there is a gulf between merely living and living worthily. To fight in a battle and live in glory is one mode. To beat a retreat, to surrender and to live the life of a captive is also a mode of survival.

B.R. Ambedkar (1891-1956), renowned scholar and author of India's Constitution.

Life is short, and therefore, one thing being certain, death, let us take up a great ideal, and give up the whole life to it. For what is the value of life, this vegetating little low life of man? Subordinating it to one high ideal is the only value that life has.

Swami Vivekananda.

Get up, and set your shoulder to the wheel – How long is this life for? As you have come into this world, leave some mark behind. Otherwise, where is the difference between you and the trees and stones? They too come into existence, decay and die.

A profound and inspirational quote on life by Swami Vivekananda.

The True Measure of Success is a Life Lived Purposefully, in Contentment and Peace,

Dedicated in the Selfless Service of Others

So often in life we look upon people who have achieved great wealth and fame as being successful. We equate material wealth, power and position with a successful life.

We forget that a truly successful life is when we have given more than we have received from this earth and society; when we have faithfully discharged our responsibilities as parents, children and stewards of our nation and communities; when we have kept our mind steady amidst all kinds of mental hurricanes, trials and tribulations; when we have done each job, however small, to the best of our ability; and when we are happy and grateful for the innumerable gifts that the Creator has bestowed upon each of us.

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Great peacefulness, lofty detachment, selfless affection and dispassionate service – these are measures of success in life. If you can find peace within yourself and spread solace to all around you, your life will be more worthy than that of an empress.

If you allow your mind to carp at all and sundry, it will turn against itself: the majority of our sorrows are self-inflicted.

Rabindranath Tagore writing a letter to his wife Mrinalini, addressing her concerns of living amidst a large joint-family (1898).

A good life with contentment is itself a great wealth. For we brought nothing with us into this world, and we can take nothing out of it. So if we have enough of what we need, let us be content with that.

But people who long to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many foolish desires and schemes that plunge them into ruin and destruction. For love of money is the root of all of evil and some having pursued its power, fall from faith and end in sorrow.

Timothy 6:6-10

The more one lives alone on the river or in the open country, the clearer it becomes that nothing is more beautiful or great than to perform the ordinary duties of one's daily life simply and naturally.

From the grasses in the field to the stars in the sky, each one is doing just that; and there is such profound peace and surpassing beauty in nature because none of these tries forcibly to transgress its limitations.

Yet what each one does is by no means of little moment. The grass has to put forth all its energy to draw sustenance from the uttermost tips of its rootlets simply to grow where it is as grass; it does not vainly strive to become a banyan tree; and so the earth gains a lovely carpet of green.

And, indeed, what little of beauty and peace is to be found in the societies of men is owing to the daily performance of small duties, not to big doings and fine talk.

An excerpt from a letter written by Rabindranath Tagore in 1892, published in his enchanting and must read book [Glimpses of Bengal](#).

It was Lord Jesus Christ who said "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it, but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall save it. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

What Jesus meant was that whoever is attached to the worldly life and this earthly body will lose them in death. But whoever lets go of attachments to this worldly life and this earthly body and identifies with the permanence or God-consciousness that Jesus represented, will never die.

What good does it do to have all the riches of the world and all the world's pleasures? They will all disappear in the flash we call a human lifetime. Focusing on the pleasures of the world keeps the mind too distracted to search for the inner Self.

Swami Rama.

A life directed chiefly towards the fulfillment of personal desires sooner or later always leads to bitter disappointment.

Albert Einstein (1879-1955).

Everyone seems to have a clear idea of how other people should lead their lives, but none about his or her own.

Paulo Coelho.

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I hope you enjoyed reading these **inspirational life quotes** as much as I did researching them! Be sure to explore more such quotes from the outstanding [Words of Wisdom](#) collection.

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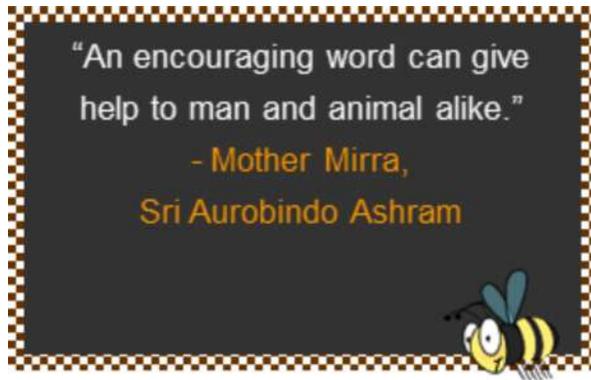
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